

Inspection of a good school: Godstone Primary and Nursery School

Ivy Mill Lane, Godstone, Surrey RH9 8NH

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

Godstone Primary and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are at the heart of this nurturing and vibrant school. They feel safe and valued as individuals. Pupils form strong relationships with the staff. Parents appreciate the guidance and support that staff provide. As one parent wrote, 'Our children are flourishing at Godstone. There is always such a warm, happy atmosphere in school and a real sense of community.'

High expectations permeate every aspect of school life. Leaders place no limits on what pupils can accomplish. In classrooms, there is a purposeful buzz of learning. Playtimes are cheerful occasions where pupils have fun. Pupils are rightly confident that any unkind behaviour will not be tolerated. They have a strong sense of how they should look after themselves and each other. One pupil expressed this by saying, 'I think that love might be the most powerful magic of all, it helps us to be kind.'

Pupils appreciate the range of wider opportunities on offer. Clubs, such as gymnastics, football and singing, help to develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils are proud to take on positions of responsibility such as librarians or sports captains. Through the much-respected school council, pupils use their democratic voice to contribute to important decisions that affect them.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, governors and staff have an unwavering determination that all pupils develop 'a love of learning for life'. Pupils are encouraged to build their 'learning powers' of resilience, resourcefulness, reciprocity and reflectiveness. These attributes are regularly celebrated and rewarded when pupils demonstrate them.

The school's curriculum is ambitious, exciting and well designed. Starting in early years, the essential knowledge and skills that pupils should learn, and the order in which they should learn them, is precisely set out. Teachers ensure that pupils' learning carefully builds on what they already know and can do. They carefully check pupils' understanding

and address any gaps in learning before moving them on to more complex ideas. Leaders and teachers identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and /or disabilities accurately. Knowledgeable staff use their training to adapt learning and ensure activities are well matched to pupils' needs. However, leaders have identified that in a small number of subjects, some staff do not have subject expertise. This means that while pupils achieve well overall, they could do even better. Leaders are addressing this.

Reading sits at the heart of the school's curriculum. This starts in Nursery, where children develop a love of reading through regular opportunities to listen to, and retell, stories and rhymes. They know many of these by heart. Staff model, and expect children to use, ambitious vocabulary. This supports children's speech and language development. Pupils read books that are well matched to their reading ability. Staff carefully listen and check that pupils are becoming confident and fluent readers. They quickly spot any gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge and give extra support where needed. While the teaching of phonics is largely effective, leaders know that some staff need additional training.

Pupils are proud of their school. They have positive attitudes toward learning. Consequently, learning is rarely interrupted. Children in early years learn to take turns and communicate their thoughts and feelings exceptionally well. Staff encourage children to try hard and keep going when they find things challenging. This helps children to build their self-confidence and independence.

Pupils' personal development is a strength. They have a range of meaningful opportunities to learn about their role as responsible citizens. For instance, pupils collect food for the food bank, raise funds for charities and write letters to the residents at the local care home. Pupils find out about global issues such as the use of renewable energy and the impact of deforestation. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors know the strengths of the school and what leaders need to do to continue to make it even better. They challenge leaders on the quality of education effectively. Governors make sure that the processes for managing staff's well-being and workload are in place and working successfully. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. There is a strong feeling of camaraderie among the team, and staff morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff place high importance on pupils' welfare and safety. They teach pupils to recognise risks, so they are more able to keep themselves safe. Staff receive regular and up-to-date training. Clear systems are in place to identify pupils who may need support. Staff know leaders take their worries seriously and that no concern is too small to report. Leaders are tenacious in their work. They follow up on any worries swiftly and liaise closely with other agencies. This ensures that pupils and their families get the help they need. Governors monitor safeguarding practices, including the recruitment of staff, carefully.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are inconsistencies in how phonics is taught. This affects some pupils' learning and progress. Leaders should continue providing staff with phonics training to ensure that the school's phonics curriculum is implemented consistently and effectively.
- Leaders are aware that in a small number of subjects, staff have variable subject knowledge. This limits how well pupils achieve. Leaders need to continue providing training to develop teachers' expertise to deliver the curriculum successfully.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	125021
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10241698
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Clare Thurman
Headteacher	Nick Usher
Website	www.godstone.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in June 2020. A new chair of governors was appointed in May 2021.
- The provision in the Nursery offers places to two-year-old children.
- The school offers wraparound care for pupils at the school. It is managed by school leaders and run by non-teaching members of staff.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other school leaders, staff and three governors, including the chair of the governing body. The inspector also spoke with a representative from Surrey local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and

computing. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. She also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the additional free-text responses.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey. She also met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school development plan and pupil premium funding plan.

Inspection team

Louise Walker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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